

Remarks

Claims 1-18 are pending herein. By this Preliminary Amendment, the specification and claims 1-17 have been amended, and new claim 18 has been added.

The specification and claim 13 have been amended to correct the sequence listing recited for the primer SEQ ID No. 6. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification at, for example, page 20, lines 7-8; page 22, lines 25-26; and page 29, line 5; and in claim 17.

The specification and claim 2 have been amended to replace the sequence listing therein with the correct sequence listing for SEQ ID No. 4. The current sequence listing in the specification at page 17, lines 29-32 and in claim 2 is for SEQ ID No. 3. Support for this amendment to the specification and claim 2 can be found in the specification at, for example, page 27, line 15 through page 28, line 17, which set forth the correct sequence listings for both SEQ ID No. 3 and SEQ ID No. 4.

Claim 6 has been amended to replace the recitation "NH₄COOH is in the range of about 0.3M-1M" with the recitation "--NaCl is present in an amount of about 0.2M--". Claim 7 has been amended to replace the recitation "NH₄COOH is about 0.7M" with the recitation "--NaCl is about 0.2M--". The specification has been amended at page 18 to be consistent with the amendments to claims 6 and 7. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at, for example, page 21, line 27. In addition, the specification has been amended at page 21, line 27 to delete the comma ",", between "0.2M" and "NaCl". Claim 6 has been further amended to recite that the recited amount of N lauryl sarcosyl is based on the weight of the buffer.

Claims 1-17 have each been amended to correct typographical and/or grammatical errors.

Claim 1 has been further amended in part to delete the phrase "including mucus" from line 3. This feature is now recited in new claim 18.

Claim 3 has been further amended to incorporate the phrase "--the group consisting of--" after the language "selected from".

Claim 4 has been further amended to use the plural form of "specimen" to be consistent with the language used in claim 1. Claim 4 has also be amended to incorporate the phrase --adding to said specimens—after the language "is carried out", and to delete the phrase "(live organisms other than mycobacteria and mucus)".

Claim 8 has been further amended to use proper Markush language.

Claim 9 has been further amended to change the dependency from "claims 1 and 6" to --claim 1--.

Claim 11 has been further amended to include the phrase --providing an-- after the language "steps of" at line 3.

Claim 12 has been further amended to correct the dependency from claim 13 to claim 1, and to include the phrase --providing an-- after the language "steps of" at line 3.

New claim 18 recites specific examples of contaminant clarified in step (a) of the claim 1 method. Support for these examples can be found, e.g., in claims 1 and 4.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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